"HERACLES," MILLIONAIRESS

WHILE it is not difficult to picture *Heracles* carrying Cerberus from Hades to the upper world (he does it every day, at £6 10s. a time ex Croydon), one finds it harder to visualise him catching a Hind—which, if you remember, was another of his Twelve Labours.

In spite of his illustrious name, we prefer to think of him as a dear old lady. A nice fat, comfortable, easy-going old lady, kindly tolerant of those skittish, smooth-skinned young things who go screaming past her on the way to Paris.

On Wednesday of last week *Heracles* had a birthday party to celebrate her completion of just one million miles in the service of Imperial Airways, during which six-year period she has carried some 80,000 passengers in comfort and safety. Her employers were there, represented by Sir Samuel Instone; her makers, by Group Capt. Maycock and Mr. J. Hamilton, of Handley Page's; the Brenards, *père et fils*, acted as M.C.s on behalf of Imperials; and Capt. F. Dismore, First Officer Jeffreys and Wireless Operator Raeburn kept the party going—in the strictly literal sense.

Taking off from Croydon shortly after 1 p.m. in QBI conditions (and what an unexpected surge of acceleration the four 555 h.p. Bristol Jupiters still bestow!), *Heracles* ploughed relentlessly up through 4,000 ft. of cloud, then cruised south-west at 6,000 ft. at her own staid and comfortable gait while Stewards Baikie, Hart and Smith dispensed a five-course lunch as excellent as any we have ever enjoyed on land, sea or air.

At the millionth mile Capt. Dismore (having, it is to be hoped, checked up the fact carefully with C.D.C. and log-book) made the rounds of the ship and joined the passengers in a champagne toast to her.

Turning ten or so miles beyond Southampton, *Heracles* boomed majestically homewards, circled London while awaiting permission to enter the control, then sank out of the sunlight into the murk of an English summer. The party was over.

For the data-addicts who were in their kindergartens when *Heracles* and her seven sisters were born, we may add: Length, 89 ft. 9 in.; span, 130 ft.; gross weight, 30,000 lb.; maximum speed, 127 m.p.h.; cruising speed, 95 m.p.h.; passengers, 38-40; crew, 5-6.

Customs at Leicester and Exeter

ON July 19 Leicester airport was officially opened for Customs by the Lord Mayor (Councillor A. H. Swain, J.P.), who had himself flown from Deauville in Mr. Lindsay Everard's Vega Gull. Such facilities are now available, too, at the new Exeter airport

Gatwick De-zoned

SINCE the Gatwick radio station has now been closed, the controlled zone surrounding this airport is no longer in operation. At the same time the operation of the Lorenz short-wave approach system has been discontinued, though this may still be used for experimental approaches at certain times.

Over the Western Isles

A NEW private company has been registered in Edinburgh under the style of Western Isles Airways, Ltd., "to establish, maintain, and operate lines of aerial conveyances in any part of the world, and to carry on business as conveyors of passengers and goods of all descriptions." One of the subscribers is Mr. George Nicholson, managing director of Northern and Scottish Airways, Ltd.

Pilots' Association

ON Monday of last week the results of the executive council ballot were announced at a special meeting of the newly formed British Air Pilots' Association. Mr. E. Lane Burslem was elected chairman, while many of the best-known transport and charter pilots found themselves on the general council. Among these are Messrs. W. Rogers, E. B. Fielden, V. E. Flowerday, C. W. H. Bebb, F. R. Midgley, T. W. Morten, D. Boitel Gill and P. W. Lynch Blosse—to mention a few.

Movements in Ceylon

AT long last Ceylon will have its air connection with the main trunk route, and the new Ratmalana airport is to be put to work. The Indo-Ceylon air mail is due to start in December this year. Tatas, of Bombay, will use Wacos for their service and when the Empire Air Mail Scheme is complete Ceylon will have five services each way. The time schedule between London and Colombo will be five days.

The Aero Club of Ceylon is expected shortly to obtain a subsidy, but in the meantime the club has secured honorary instructors and engineers from the flying staff of the East Indies Squadron. The Gipsy Moth owned by a syndicate of seven members now takes the air regularly and the Tiger Moth given by Lord Wakefield has been assembled and should by now be in the air. By the end of next year night flying equipment will be installed at Ratmalana aerodrome.

Meanwhile, Tatas are awaiting the Government's approval of the details of a projected air service linking Bombay, Delhi, Lahore and possibly Kashmir. The proposal is for a service between Bombay and Delhi, taking Gwalior and Jhansi *en route*. Jhansi is on the new trunk route.

Danish Link

DET DANSKE LUFTFARTSELSKAB, the Danish operating company, has now opened its second air line. This, between Copenhagen and Esbjerg, is designed to act as a feeder service for boat passengers between Harwich and Esbjerg, where a new airport has just been officially opened.

National airline number one, which was opened last autumn, is that between Copenhagen and Aalborg.

More and More Boats

A GLANCE at one of the recently published "Air Mail Movements" shows how the Short boats are slowly but steadily replacing the older landplanes on the Empire routes. On July 19, for instance, there were no fewer than eight of them making progress towards Durban or on the Mediterranean service, while there were only seven landplanes. The boats concerned were: *Centaurus, Challenger, Cygnus, Coriolanus, Calpurnia, Courtier, Cassiopeia* and *Castor*. Two others, *Caledonia* and *Cambria*, are, of course, reserved for long-range experiments. *Cavalier* is in Bermuda, and *Canopus, Ceres, Capella, Corsair* and *Centurion* were presumably laid up for servicing.

Those Belts

AN amendment is shortly to be issued to A.N.D.13 concerning safety-belt provision in aircraft. Normal machines must be provided with a safety belt for every seat used by the crew, with a lap strap for every other seat. Machines in the aerobatic category must carry a safety harness for every seat.

The need for safety harness in every machine used for aerobatics is an obvious one, and in spite of the opinions of several airline operators, we have always felt that the use of lap straps in all transport machines shows more practical advantages than psychological disadvantages. During the take-off and landing, and in bumpy weather, such fittings are of definite value.

"Please, It Was Only a Short One"

THE design of a new clubhouse for the Kuala Lumpur (F.M.S) Flying Club, about to be built, will probably be unique in conception. According to a correspondent, the building is to resemble in shape and appearance a Short Empire flying boat, with cabin windows and door. The "door" will be an entrance through which cars will be able to drive, and to its left will be the offices, bar and lounge. A stairway will lead to committee rooms and a flat-roofed terrace above, giving the impression of the wings of a monoplane. The building will measure 75 feet from "nose to tail" and "wing-tip to wing-tip," while "slender steel-blue columns will resemble wing-stays"—which is where the analogy seems to have come unstuck; wing-tip floats would be more to the point.

The idea seems to have its dangers. One of these days we shall find an Imperial pilot landing a club-house on Southampton Water, and the thing will take an awful lot of explaining away.